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yet reached no real, permanent security against war. True, we are comparatively a peaceful people, and we have thus far adopted a policy remarkably pacific ; but the mass of our people are still saturated with the war-spirit, and might easily be roused into a war-excitement that would convulse the nation like a moral earthquake. God grant that the provocation may never come ; but, if it should, we shall expect to find our worst fears realized.

Thus wrote one of our friends some five years ago ; and now his forebodings are turned into realities, more deplorable than he predicted. Such a man, this very man, was denounced as an incendiary, for efforts and utterances like these, even by *some* conductors of the *religious* press claiming to be too wise to countenance such warnings ! Honest men, we doubt not ; but how strangely lacking either in knowledge, reflection or sagacity on this subject. Such men will be sure to say, when peace is restored between us and Mexico, ‘this certainly is our last war ; we have now burnt our fingers too much ever to thrust them into another fire of this sort.’ So far from this, our people will be far *more* ready to plunge into another war, and may even exult at the prospect of measuring lances with a power like England.

OMENS OF GENERAL WAR.*

MORAL diseases are much more contagious than physical ; and the terrible epidemic of war, the great moral plague of the world, has now begun among ourselves a career of havoc and desolation, which may yet reach the utmost bounds of Christendom. This gangrene on the body-politic, this species of political cholera, does sometimes spread with fearful rapidity from nation to nation, from continent to continent, until its deadly miasma taints more or less the atmosphere of the whole world.

Thus arose the late wars of Europe. The plague-spot appeared first in Paris ; and it is quite remarkable, that those twenty-two years of bloodshed and devastation started from the fiercely warlike *republicans* of France, the armed propagandists of freedom, with the motto and the war-cry, *Peace to the cottage, and war to the palace*. It was a species of belligerent philanthropy, an attempt to bless the world with the sword, very much as some madmen among ourselves would fain overrun all Mexico, bombarding her cities, and butchering her inhabitants, plundering her treasures, and appropriating to ourselves her

*This article, written several months before the report of the late revolution in France reached this country, was crowded out of our last number ; but we think its suggestions are still needed, and may be useful.

entire territory, just for *her* benefit, for the extension there of our own privileges, our free and glorious institutions !

This war-spirit is alarmingly contagious ; and where or when it will stop, it is quite impossible to foresee, and vain to conjecture. It has spread over our own country like a hurricane of fire on one of our western prairies, or like a simoom sweeping over the sand-deserts of Arabia. It has waked here a wild, reckless spirit that will not down at the bidding of our wisest and best men. It is in embryo the very spirit of the French Revolution, a startling prognostic of similar atrocities and horrors at a future day among ourselves. It has also called forth responses of sympathy and applause from multitudes of kindred war-spirits in the Old World ; nor would it be at all surprising, if sparks from this magazine of mischief should ultimately kindle, in some one of a hundred ways that are possible, the flames of war all over Europe. Such a result would accord with the long-cherished fears of our most thoughtful and sagacious men. The next great conflict has been expected to be a war of opinion and principle ; a contest between the claims of legitimacy, and the demands of popular freedom ; between the ruling few, and the subject many ; between despotism and liberty. It matters little when or how such a strife begins ; there are lines enough of moral electricity to send its spirit through the civilized world, and marshal these opposing forces very soon in battle-array. True, this spirit has not yet grasped the sword in Europe ; but there are some ominous indications that it may ere long do so in earnest, and eventually involve the greater part of Christendom in the conflict.

Look over Europe. The whole peninsula of Spain and Portugal, though nominally pacified for the time being, is still unsettled, and ready to plunge at once into commotion and conflict. The Pope, taking advantage of necessity, and yielding to the spirit of the age, is granting his subjects such privileges as may lead to increased demands, and spread the popular infection far and wide into the surrounding states. Austria, instigated by Russia, backed even by Prussia, and somewhat encouraged by France herself, is on the alert to repress this spirit of liberty, and resist alike its demands and its diffusion. The helm of Europe, too, may soon be in other hands. The master-minds, now at the head of its principal governments, cannot remain there long. Louis Philippe, pledged alike from necessity and choice to the preservation of general peace, and called by his admirers at home "the Napoleon of Peace," is nearly seventy-five years old ; and there is much reason to fear, that his death may be the signal for commotion in France, and for conflict through Europe. It is said, that the law of Russia forbids any one man to hold the reins of empire more than twenty-five years ; a law that would dismiss Nicholas from the

throne in less than three years from this time ; and such an event would also be likely to endanger the tranquillity and peace of Christendom. Meanwhile, England seems to be girding herself, by the increase of her military preparations, for some great crisis ; and Switzerland, perched on her peculiar form of freedom in the very heart of Europe, is still in an unsettled and ominous condition. In such circumstances, it surely would require little to kindle the flames of a war that might involve the whole continent for ten or twenty years, and thus put back the world's progress, its evangelization and general improvement, one or two centuries !

A few years ago, we should have been much less inclined than we now are to such gloomy forebodings ; but recent events in our own country, so suddenly outstripping all calculation, and all former belief, have forced us into deeper and wider inquiries on this subject. Five or even two years ago, nobody dreamed, that our people could be instigated to do what they *have* done in the present war, and much less to clamor for its continuance until, in bitter mockery of all our professions, and of our whole policy hitherto, we subjugate and absorb all Mexico ! We find, that we had all along been securely slumbering over a volcano of war-passions ; and on such a volcano may all Christendom now be sleeping in a security just as false, and as fatally deceptive. Let the war-spirit wake there as it has here ; and no human sagacity can foresee how far it will spread, or where it will stay its terrible ravages.

God grant we may prove false prophets ; but certainly it is no time now for the friends of peace to sleep on their watch-towers. Let them at once open their eyes to the possible, if not probable dangers that hang over all Christendom, and gird themselves more zealously than ever to their work of rectifying popular sentiment on this subject, of warning the people against this worst of national evils, and of urging rulers to prevent its return, and supersede forever its alleged necessity, by the introduction of feasible and effective substitutes. It may be that we must work for such a result *now or never*. Perhaps Christendom, so far as respects the present question, is at this moment balancing on the pivot of her destiny. This work *ought* to have been done long ago ; and, had Europe *in season* spent in this cause the merest fraction of the twenty or thirty thousand millions she has lavished since the battle of Waterloo upon her war-system, even in peace, she would ere this have thrown around her a cordon of moral influences quite sufficient, and sure under God, to prevent the return of this scourge upon her. When, oh when will the men of this world, or even the Church of Christ, learn, in its fullness and efficacy, the simple wisdom of the gospel, the timely application of its heaven-appointed remedy to *prevent* these terrible evils ?